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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: BADR LEADER AGREES THE MILITIA SHOULD DEMOBILIZE  
BUT COMPLAINS THAT INCENTIVES UNAVAILABLE

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert S. Ford for  
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Council of Representatives member and Badr Organization leader Hadi Farhan Abdullah al-Amiri told PolOffs on March 19 that the Al-Askariya shrine bombing was the work of Saddamists. PolOffs pressed al-Amiri that all militias needed to be under the control of the State. Amiri agreed in principle but cautioned that since the Government was unable to protect the Shia community adequately Shia militias have a security role. Moreover, the incentives during the CPA period to reintegrate militia members were unfunded and unavailable. He said that if the Iraqi Government could not provide them then the U.S. Government should do so. Poloffs also insisted that the Ministry of the Interior hold accountable those responsible for killings, disappearances, and human rights abuses, including those MoI officers who came from the Badr Corps. Al-Amiri said the Coalition needed to do more to prevent Sunnis from forcing Shia families from their homes in Nahrawan, east of Baghdad. Al-Amiri is a smart man who has not yet fully digested how his militia's actions (and excesses) in defense against Sunni Arab extremists actually spur violence from the broader Sunni Arab community. End summary.

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Update on Al-Askariya Shrine Bombing  
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¶2. (C) Council of Representatives (CoR) member and Badr Organization head Hadi Farhan Abdullah al-Amiri said the Al-Askariyah Golden Shrine in Samarra was bombed by terrorists and criminal Saddamists, as shown by the method of the attack. He indicated that the Ministry of Interior is close to questioning some of the people who may be involved. Al-Amiri regretted the Shia's violent reaction to the bombing. This attack, al-Amiri said, was an alarm bell to signal the need for both Sunni and Shia to combat terrorism together.

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Militia Reintegration Complaints  
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¶3. (C) Al-Amiri wholeheartedly agreed with PolOff that extra-governmental militias make the GOI look weak and ineffective, that the militias must ultimately be demobilized, and that only the government should be able to use force, and then only according to Rule of Law. But he complained that the USG has not fulfilled its promise to provide the money to help demobilize and reintegrate militias. He recalled that CPA Order 91 guaranteed that militia elders would receive pensions, militia academics would re-enter the workforce, and the young militia members would receive training and could join the armed forces on

an individual basis. (Note: Funding for this is up to the Government of Iraq. End note.) PolOff stated that it is GOI's responsibility to fund reintegration through the budget. Al-Amiri replied that more money was going to pay pensions for the Peshmerga and even Saddam's army than for the fighters of the Badr Organization. The Peshmerga were absorbed into the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and became the National Guard for Kurdistan. Al-Amiri complained that only two percent of the Badr forces were integrated into the ISF and that he is faced with the families of more than 3,000 martyrs whose families are owed pensions. Al-Amiri countered that since the GOI cannot fund these pensions, then the USG should do so.

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Militias Are Needed Because the Government  
Cannot Do the Job; Coalition Should Help  
Prevent Sunni Deportation of Shia Families  
in Nahrawan  
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¶4. (C) Al-Amiri's constant refrain was that independent Islamist Shia militias were necessary because neither the Coalition nor the Government could protect the people. For example, al-Amiri said, the Coalition was not doing enough to protect Shia families in Nahrawan (east of Baghdad), where Shia families were being displaced in large numbers by Sunni militias or insurgents. Al-Amiri demanded that the Coalition protect the people of Nahrawan and said if they did not, "the people" would protect themselves by forming their own militia. PolOffs responded that the Government, of which al-Amiri was an important leader, had the responsibility to protect its people, and that it should take over responsibility for security from militias.

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Solution for the Ministry of the  
Interior: More Purges Needed  
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¶5. (C) The solution, al-Amiri said, was to continue to purge the Ministry of the Interior and the related, smaller security services of those who supported the former regime. When PolOff asked how many of those to be purged would be Sunnis in the Ministry, al-Amiri evaded the question. "We can purge the MOI," al-Amiri said, "but the first ones who will object will be the Americans." PolOff replied that the removal of those who actually committed crimes would not be perceived as a purge if incompetent and corrupt Shia and Sunni were all released. Al-Amiri said that the problem was that 80-90 percent of the police in the Ministry during Allawi's time needed to be removed.

¶6. (C) Al-Amiri agreed that if any Badr Organization member in the Ministry of the Interior breaks the law, the MOI should punish him. Al-Amiri, however, then tried to deflect the conversation into a critique of Mishan al-Jaburi and the Facility Protection Service.

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We Are the Victims  
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¶7. (C) Al-Amiri said that there is a misconception that the Shia are not the victims but the reason for all the violence. The problem in Iraq is not the militias, MOI or MOD but the terrorists and the Saddamists. Al-Amiri said that the Shia need to protect themselves since the GOI has failed to protect the Shia and so has MNF-I. PolOffs reminded al-Amiri that he and the other leaders of the Shia Coalition play major roles in the government, and could hardly consider the government to be someone else. The solution was to improve the capacity of the government, not to turn the government's responsibilities over to private

militias. Al-Amiri said the government did not have enough trained police to protect the people, but he could not explain why the government could not move police from quiet areas in the deep-south to hot spots like Nahrawan. Al-Amiri said he has been in meetings with the Ambassador and General Casey requesting MNF-I assistance with forced deportations in Nahrawan. Al-Amiri claimed that USG help has been uneven, giving MNF-I assistance to Sunni tribal shaykhs in Anbar, but none (so he claimed) to the Shia. The government said that Nahrawan was under USG control. If the USG could not make Nahrawan secure, he said, "the Iraqi Government should handle the security file totally."

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Inclusion of Sunnis  
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18. (C) Al-Amiri agreed the time to form the new government is now but doubts that it can happen soon. PolOffs urged that the Iraqis get on with the process and finish it quickly. Al-Amiri said it is hard enough to negotiate bilaterally, and now there are four groups. Al-Amiri said the Shia Coalition could ally either with the Sunni Islamists in Tawafaq or the Kurds, in order to get just above the 184 (two-thirds of 275) votes required in the CoR. He said, however, that this would not create a stable government. Bringing all four groups together will take some time because of mistrust and fear between parties, he said. The Sunnis are the have-nots and fear under-representation. The Kurds remember Anfal and Halabja, and the Shia fear the return of the Saddamists. This situation, he warned, allows for extremists to drive the agenda toward civil war.

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Comment  
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19. (C) Al-Amiri agrees in principle that all militias should be demobilized -- he just does not want the Shia to go first. We told him other examples in history where militia leaders took this approach and it was a recipe for a cycle of violence that was difficult to stop. Watching carefully what al-Amiri was writing down, it is clear he got the intended message that the militias, especially the Jaysh al-Mahdi, need to be brought under government control. At one level, given the rivalry between Badr and Jaysh al-Mahdi, which came to violence in August 2005, al-Amiri might agree with us. Al-Amiri was oblivious to the irony that while he would argue it was wrong to have Sunni

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politicians who keep one foot in supporting the insurgency while the other foot is in politics, Badr is doing exactly the same thing. Badr clearly benefits from having Sadr as a more extremist group. What we have not yet heard him acknowledge is that fear of the Badr Corps drives some Sunni Arabs to arms. Al-Amiri is an example of a leader who has not fully digested how to make the transition from being the leader of an insurgent group to being the leader of a mature, evolving democracy. At one level, he understands what needs to be done, but at another level, he seems incapable of understanding how his fighters' defensive actions (and excesses) against Sunni Arab extremists actually spur violence from the broader Sunni Arab community. End comment.

KHALILZAD